

Email Protocol

Email communication is the preferred method for the first point of contact with a staff member. Thank you for being considerate and patient as staff often have a large workload, and academic staff often teach large/ or multiple classes. We will endeavour to respond within 2-3 working days of receipt of the email. The ability to communicate effectively in professional practice is an important Graduate Quality and this should be evident in all communications.

If a staff member is unable to respond to emails within 24-48 hours, an out of office message will be utilised to indicate that the staff member is on leave, offshore etc.

As a student you also need to consider why you are sending an e-mail and how this tool can be used most effectively for you. E-mail was designed primarily to replace postal mail and as such is not meant to provide an instant response to your query. While it possible for this to happen if the person you are e-mailing is at their computer and not busy, it can also be a number of days before you receive a response if the recipient is without network access. So before hitting send, consider if:

- you can find the answer to the question yourself (if you are about to send an e-mail you are connected to the internet and most of your questions can be answered by carefully checking the course website, discussion board or the text book)
- you need an instant answer or can wait a few days. If it is the former maybe you could pick up the phone; knock on someone's door or make an appointment.
- you have taken care in the wording and expression in your e-mail

Following are a list of guidelines for email use and general communication which apply to both staff and students alike:

DO	DON'T
Email the appropriate staff member only	Don't 'cc' multiple people
Wait for a response from the staff member before resending (Please see average timelines for response above 2-3 working days)	Don't resend if you don't receive a response immediately
Make an appointment to discuss the matter with the staff member if you are not satisfied with their response	Don't send multiple emails each week – aim for no more than one individual email per week per staff member
Be polite and professional in your written communication	Don't use offensive, abusive or bullying language or tone
Use correct spelling, grammar and punctuation	Don't forward emails without the consent of the original author, especially where the original message contains personal or sensitive content not intended for a wider audience
Use an identifying subject line – e.g. extension request	Don't send an email without a subject line
Ensure you include important information – e.g. your full name, ID number and course name	
Check online materials and course information booklet for answers before you email	
Check to see if others have posed the same question in the online discussion rooms/forums of your course	
Think about the email from the reader's point of view before sending	
Use your student email account	
Ensure your student email is read regularly, or diverted to your personal account	
Check the title and the spelling of the recipients name	

For further information:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/policies/codes/miscell/it-student.asp>

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